



## State of New Jersey

CHRIS CHRISTIE  
*Governor*

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
PO BOX 716  
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0716

ELIZABETH CONNOLLY  
*Acting Commissioner*

KIM GUADAGNO  
*Lt. Governor*

NATASHA JOHNSON  
*Director*  
Tel: (609) 588-2000

The following Decision is distributed for your information. This Decision has been made in consideration of the specific facts of this case. This Decision is not to be interpreted as establishing any new mandatory policy or procedure otherwise officially promulgated.

STATE OF NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

### FINAL DECISION

OAL DKT. NO. HPW 02201-18 V.L.

AGENCY DKT. NO. C653126007 (ESSEX COUNTY DIVISION OF WELFARE)

Petitioner appeals from the Respondent Agency's termination of her Work First New Jersey/General Assistance ("WFNJ/GA") and Emergency Assistance ("EA") benefits, and the imposition of a six-month period of ineligibility for EA benefits. Because Petitioner appealed, the matter was transmitted to the Office of Administrative Law for a hearing. On February 14, 2018, a plenary hearing was scheduled before the Honorable Ernest M. Bongiovanni, Administrative Law Judge ("ALJ").

On that same day, the ALJ issued an Initial Decision dismissing Petitioner's appeal. Here, Petitioner and the Agency's representative appeared before the ALJ on February 14, 2018, for the plenary hearing. See Initial Decision at 2. After a brief discussion of the matter off the record, the parties were to discuss a possible settlement and return to the courtroom. Ibid. Petitioner did not return to the courtroom and instead, left the premises. Ibid. As a result, the ALJ concluded that Petitioner had abandoned the hearing, and dismissed the appeal. Ibid.

No Exceptions to the Initial Decision were received.

As the Director of the Division of Family Development, Department of Human Services, I have reviewed the record in this matter and the ALJ's Initial Decision and, having made an independent evaluation of the record, I hereby ADOPT the Initial Decision in this matter.

Accordingly, the Initial Decision is hereby ADOPTED and the Agency's action is hereby AFFIRMED.

Officially approved final version.

FEB 21 2018

Natasha Johnson  
Director

